

REMARKS:

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner allowed claims 1, 3-39, 42 and 43 and rejected claim 44. Claim 44 is amended herein. No new matter is presented. Claims 2, 40 and 41 remain cancelled. Thus, claims 1, 3-39 and 42-44 are pending and under consideration. The rejections are traversed below.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER:

On page 3 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner indicated that claims 1, 3-39, 42 and 43 were allowed.

REJECTION UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103(a):

Claim 44 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,107,346 (Bowers) and U.S. Patent No. 5,208,684 (Itoh).

Independent claim 44 as amended recites, "directly calculating a value of a noteworthy pixel of the multilevel input image from multilevel values of pixels in a predetermined area centering around a position for estimation located predetermined distance apart from the noteworthy pixel prior to halftoning." Claim 44 further recites, "selectively diffusing a possible error occurring in the binary value and subsequently changing error diffusion techniques with respect to each of the pixels surrounding the noteworthy pixel."

On page 3 of the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner acknowledges that no prior art has been found to disclose or suggest calculation of the multilevel value of a noteworthy pixel based on multilevel values of pixels in a predetermined area that centers around a position for estimation located predetermined distance apart from the noteworthy pixel.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that Bowers and Itoh, alone or in combination, do not teach or suggest the above discussed features of claim 44 including "calculating a value of a noteworthy pixel from multilevel values of pixels in a predetermined area centering around a position for estimation located predetermined distance apart from the noteworthy pixel", as recited in claim 44.

Therefore, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

ENTRY OF AMENDMENT:

Applicants respectfully request entry of amendments to claim 44 because the amendments were made to place the present application in condition for allowance and do not

introduce significant changes that would require further search.

CONCLUSION:

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.


If there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 11/06/2006

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